

REVIEW: THEATER | By Terry Teachout

## Where's Guare? Way Out West

**T**HIS HASN'T BEEN John Guare's year—at least not in New York. Not only did the Public Theater scrap the premiere of "A Free Man of Color," his latest play, but the Broadway revival of "Brigadoon," for which Mr. Guare wrote a new book, was also put on hold. In California, though, his stock is soaring, with revivals of "Six Degrees of Separation" and "Rich and Famous" opening this month at two of the West Coast's top theaters. We haven't seen much of Mr. Guare's work in New York of late, so I flew west to find out what we've been missing. The answer: a lot.

In 1990 "Six Degrees of Separation" was the play all smart Manhattanites had to see—partly because Stockard Channing was so good in it, but mostly because Mr. Guare's satire of upper-middle-class folkways was so well timed. Money talked very loudly in 1990, and those who didn't have any longed for a close-up view of the foibles of those who did. Back then I found "Six Degrees" to be clever but shallow, which says far more about me than Mr. Guare. Today it strikes me as one of the strongest American plays of the postwar era, a comedy of liberal manners (and liberal gullibility) whose punch lines are rooted in something more than mere knowingsness.

In telling the real-life tale of a young black con man (Samuel Stricklen) who wormed his way into a string of Fifth Avenue apartments by passing himself off as Sidney Poitier's nonexist- ing son, Mr. Guare tapped into the loneliness and insecurity that have always been part of the American national character. *We are all Gatsbys now*, his characters told us, and their message rings as true in the Age of Obama as it did in the far-off days of Bush the Elder.

Nowadays "Six Degrees" doesn't get done as often as it should, presumably because it calls for a cast of 15 and an ex-



Thomas Jay Ryan, left, and Karen Ziemba, above, in "Six Degrees of Separation."

ensive-looking set. Not only has San Diego's Old Globe Theatre pulled both commodities out of its institutional hat, but Trip Cullman, the director, has brought off the coup of casting Karen Ziemba in the role that made Ms. Channing a stage star. Ms. Ziemba won a well-deserved Tony for "Contact," but in recent years she's been relegated to second-banana status on Broadway, and this is the first time that I've seen her in a straight play. It was worth the wait: Ms. Ziemba plays Ouisa, the anxious socialite of "Six Degrees," with an open-hearted warmth that puts a fresh and convincing spin on Mr. Guare's script.

**SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION**  
*Old Globe Theatre, 1549 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego (\$29-\$66), 619-234-5623, closes Feb. 15*

**RICH AND FAMOUS**  
*American Conservatory Theater, 41 Geary St., San Francisco (\$17-\$82), 415-749-2228, closes Feb. 8*

**THE AMERICAN PLAN**  
*Manhattan Theatre Club, Samuel J. Friedman Theatre, 261 W. 47th St., New York (\$56.50-\$96.50), 212-239-6200/800-432-7250, closes Mar. 15*

Mr. Stricklen doesn't seem slick enough at first glance, but he finds his way into the part, and the other members of Mr. Cullman's cast, Thomas Jé Ryan, Catherine Gowl and Sloan Grey

one of which contains a brutal skewering of Leonard Bernstein (Stephen DeRosa), with whom Mr. Guare worked in his youth. Yet its specific emotional gravity is surprisingly high, and the overall effect is less farcical than melancholy, especially in the poignant scene in which Bing, Mr. Guare's maldroit alter ego, runs into an ex-girlfriend (Mary Birdsong) and finds that his failure looks like success from her suburban point of view.

Mr. Guare has given "Rich and Famous" an extensive rewrite for this production. Never having seen the original version, I can't tell you whether this one works better, but it definitely works. John Rando, who directs comedy as well as anyone in America, has staged it to the hilt for A.C.T., and his cast acts accordingly. I laughed, my head off, then went home feeling wistful—which is undoubtedly what Mr. Guare had in mind.

**RICHARD GREENBERG** is back on Broadway yet again, this time with a revival of "The American Plan," the 1990 play that put him on the map. It is, like all his other plays, repellently glib, and seeing it in tandem with "Six Degrees of Separation" also suggests that it is... oh, let's be nice and call it derivative. Like "Six Degrees," "The American Plan" is a snapshot of upper-middle-class life that hinges on the deceptions of a presentable young man who turns out to be (A) poor and (B) gay. In "The American Plan," the young man in question (Kieran Campion) is courting a rich girl (Lily Rabe) who is brassy but neurotic, and the air becomes clogged with pseudo-witty one-liners. Enter the Evil Mother (Mercedes Ruehl), followed by the young man's former lover (Austin Lyss). Emotionally fraught hijinks à la Douglas Sirk ensue. What else is new? Nothing whatsoever.

Other people like Mr. Greenberg's stuff, so it may be that I'm temperamentally deaf to his charms—but I doubt it, just because Broadway audiences laugh at play doesn't make it funny. Or smart. Or good.

Mr. Teachout, the *Journal's* drama critic, blogs about theater and the other arts at [www.terryteachout.com](http://www.terryteachout.com). Write to him at [teachout@wsj.com](mailto:teachout@wsj.com).

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THEATER REVIEW

## A superficial return for 'Six Degrees of Separation'

Several subtle yet powerful shadings of John Guare's 1990 play go missing in the Old Globe's production.

**CHARLES McMULTY**  
THEATER CRITIC  
REPORTING FROM SAN DIEGO

A few things have changed since John Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation" first held the mirror up to New York's social-climbing nature nearly two decades ago. The 5th Avenue setting graduated from million-to-billion-dollar deals, the Japanese lost their yen for tourist treasures, and international Ponzi schemes came to replace the more personalized (and relatively small-potato) con games of yore.

But as the Old Globe pro-

duction of Guare's 1990 play makes clear, life is pretty much the same in the deluxe condos of the rich and rapacious.

Then as now, money-making machinations take up most of the day and night. The kid's education is still an unbeatable source of networking and status-mongering. And transforming experience into sparkling dinner-party anecdotes remains the ultimate point of existence.

Guare knew of what he satirized, which perhaps explains the generosity of spirit that accompanies his comic dissection of the mores and manners of those conspicuously consuming urban types. Racing from charity function to the latest restaurant opening, these characters surround themselves with elegance and beauty, but in their competitive displays of good taste have lost sight of imagination and truth.

A similar superficiality can be detected in the handling of

this mostly enjoyable yet ultimately thin revival. Directed by Trip Cullman with a brisk, clean efficiency, the production doesn't dwell long enough in Guare's glistening shallows for us to become aware of the work's hidden depths. The delivery is smart, slick and surface-oriented — an ice skate across a play that hasn't lost its diamond clarity.

The cast is headed by Broadway veteran Karen Ziemba (a Tony winner for "Contact"), who somehow exudes a reassuring sturdiness even when acting flighty. Here, she plays Ouisa, the spitty wife and business accomplice of Fian Kittredge (Thomas Jay Ryan), an independent art dealer who flips masterpieces to foreign oligarchs for gigantic profits.

Stockard Channing justly received much acclaim for playing Ouisa onstage in the Lincoln Center Theater premiere and later in the 1993 mov-

### 'Six Degrees of Separation'

Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays; 8 p.m.

Thursdays, Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. Ends Feb. 15.

Price: \$29 to \$66

Contact: (619) 23-GLOBE

Running time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

le adaptation, but it's such a great role that no one talent should have a monopoly on it. Ziemba holds her own in the scintillating comic dimensions of this fast-talking New Yorker with two kids at Harvard, another at Groton, and a husband on the brink of a megabuck windfall. But the production isn't interested in exploring a nuanced version of the

character's emotional journey.

Ouisa's psychological awakening is precipitated by the intrusion of Paul (insimulatingly portrayed by Samuel Stricklen), a young black man who poses as the Ivy League chum of her children and the son of none other than Sidney Pottier. Claiming to have been mugged in Central Park, Paul barges into Ouisa and Fian's posh abode just as the couple are courting Geoffrey (Tony Torn), a South African tycoon and a potential investor in Fian's latest masterpiece scheme. This preppy fraud, a master at dropping all the right literary and celebrity names, has a virtual open-sesame into this exceedingly gullible Upper East Side club.

The thrill of discovering new connections — especially involving one whose famous father is supposedly coming to town to make a movie of "Cats" — excites Ouisa into recognizing the way that "every person

is a new door, opening up into other worlds." But if there turns out to be only "six degrees of separation" between any two strangers, there can still be a lot of darkness between friends and family members. (The young cast members nail the screaming resentment of privileged offspring.)

Like the two-sided Kandinsky in Ouisa and Fian's living room, everyone hides a secret face. In Guare's buoyantly comic view, we're at once intimately linked and miles apart — an observation that is, if anything, even more resonant in our high-tech globalized era.

But though the production is impressive at first glance (Andromache Chalfant's luxurious set design doesn't bear scrutiny but gets the job done), the deeper meanings of the play float by like soap bubbles. This "Six Degrees" has charm but little bite.

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## THEATER REVIEW

# Even before the Internet, instant bonding beguiled

By James Hebert  
THEATER CRITIC

Back away from the Facebook, friends. Look up from that monstrously hypnotic monitor long enough to contemplate how, a mere 20 years ago, it actually was not possible to become fake pals with Madonna or the president-elect just by unabashedly asking.

And then Twitter me this: How is it that a period play



Karen Ziemba

—meaning, from the pre-Internet period — can capture with such queasy accuracy both that eagerness to form instant bonds with others (particularly those with a whiff of celebrity), and the emptiness that can stem from such ephemeral connections?

John Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation," the twitchy 1990 comedy now in its San Diego debut at the Old Globe, is on the surface about a particular place and time: mid-1980s on the Upper East Side, the height of the Age of Excess.

But as directed by Trip Cullman with propulsive energy and plenty of dramatic (not to mention literal) color, the play is a reminder that long before the whole world was within one mouse-click of, say, Kevin Bacon, there was a deep fascination with the idea of a small world, and a desire to bask in the flattery of being linked to the luminous.

"Six Degrees" delves into other themes, too: race, identity, sexual politics. Cullman brings us straight into both the period and the mood at the top of the play with the ominous throb and stuttering drumbeat of New Order's "Blue Monday," as Flan Kittredge (Thomas Jay Ryan) and his wife, Ouisa (Karen Ziemba) — the art-dealing socialites at the show's center — burst in a stumbling rush to stage front.

Still in their '80s Day-glo robes, they start to tell of their startling experience with a houseguest named Paul (Samuel Strickien, radiating just the right quiet confidence), who claims to be the son of Sidney Poitier and a friend of the Kittredges' kids. They took him in after he showed up with a story about being robbed of cash and his school thesis on the street.

Then, in flashbacks, they're in the story. Guare's time-jumping gambit runs the risk of jolting us from absorption in the story, but it makes sense for one good reason: The play is in essence

### DETAILS

"Six Degrees of Separation"

When: Tuesdays-Wednesdays, 7 p.m.; Thursdays-Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 2 and 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 and 7 p.m. Through Feb. 15.

Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Tickets: \$29-\$66

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: TheOldGlobe.org

Ouisa's story; through Paul, she seeks to reach out from her cloistered and pampered existence and re-connect with something more daring and alive in herself.

Ouisa insists she won't let this experience with Paul become just an anecdote, something to spit out at cocktail parties "like a human jukebox." But that's essentially how the story is finally told, and it suggests in some way the futility of Ouisa's effort to break out of her gilded cage.

Ziemba, a Tony-winner for "Contact," deftly mixes humor with regret as Ouisa, who is as duped as anyone by Paul but is the last one to hold onto compassion for their troubled new friend.

Ryan has a feel for funny bluster as the status-obsessed Flan, who seems to take it more personally when Paul is found out as a fraud. He squirms at recognizing something of himself in Paul, whose own art is in inventing and marketing an identity, one as elusive and as dependent on perception as is the price of a painting.

The only people who seem to see through the facade are the couple's sullen and spoiled kids, as well as the children of close friends (played by Donald Sage Mackay and the comically brittle Keliher Walsh) who wind up similarly bamboozled by Paul.

The Kittredges feel betrayed when they catch Paul in bed with a hustler at their house; at that moment, Adromache Chalfant's chic, art-heavy set breaks open to reveal a grittier world of scaffolds and graffiti beyond. The transgression — for both the Kittredges and the audience — is heightened by the way Paul's scruffy companion (Joaquin Perez-Campbell) struts around the place, naked and belligerent.

But what does Paul ultimately take from the Kittredges? Hardly anything. "He came into our house. He cooked us dinner. He told us the story of 'The Catcher in the Rye,'" they tell a skeptical detective.

What he gave them, though, was what they can't quite forgive. It's the lurking suspicion that, as Paul's "Catcher in the Rye" thesis proposes: "Everyone's a phony." And not just those who are six degrees removed.

# THEATERMANIA

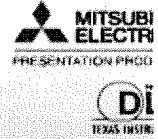
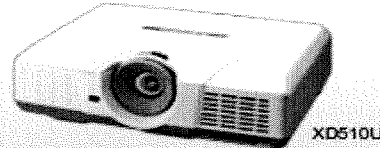
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REVIEWS

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## Six Degrees of Separation

Reviewed By: **Rob Stevens** · Jan 17, 2009 · San Diego

The world has changed tremendously in the nearly two decades since John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation*, now being its given San Diego premiere at the Old Globe Theatre, first touched on the idea of how everyone on the planet -- and not just Kevin Bacon -- is connected to someone else by the thinnest of threads. But time hasn't blunted the topicality of Guare's literate play or its fascination with the duality of personality and character, all of which is in evidence in Trip Cullman's sterling production, acted with panache by a very talented cast led by Tony Award winner Karen Ziemba.

Guare based his play on a real occurrence that took place among wealthy Manhattanites in the early 1980s. Here, fictional art dealer Flan Kittridge (Thomas Jay Ryan) and his stylish wife Ouisa (Ziemba) are entertaining their South African mine owner friend Geoffrey (Tony Torn) -- in the hopes of getting him to invest in their latest acquisition -- when their doorman brings in Paul (Samuel Stricklen in a star-making performance), a bleeding young black man who claims he was mugged in the park. Paul also claims to be a friend of their children, who are away at Harvard, and has intimate knowledge of the Kittridges. Moreover, he also claims to be the son of actor Sidney Poitier, whom he is meeting in the morning. Unsurprisingly, these star-struck socialites let him into their kitchen and their lives, with ultimately disastrous consequences.

As the work progresses, we discover that Flan and Ouisa aren't the only ones who were taken in by the charismatic young con man and the chance to be extras in his father's supposed film version of the musical *Cats*. Another wealthy couple and a divorced doctor were also duped by Paul, and a meeting with the Kittridge's rebellious and very vocal offspring prove how truly gullible the parents are. Equally taken in is Rick (heartbreakingly played by Joaquin Perez-Campbell), a young wanna-be actor from Utah who is taken in by Paul's story of abandonment and seduced by his charm.

The play, however, ultimately centers on Ouisa's determination to discover the true identity of this outsider who so touched her life. The puzzle pieces start to fall into place -- even as a few remain missing -- leaving Ouisa a markedly changed person. Ziemba beautifully etches this woman of privilege who slowly comes to realize there is a very different and starkly real world outside her safe ivory tower. As she experiences real emotions and feelings, her pain and helplessness are very palpable.

Cullman's crisp direction makes the 90-minute play zip by. Andromache Chalfant's breakaway scenic design contrasts the lushness of the Central Park living quarters and its artworks with the grim reality of the city streets and its graffiti art. Emily Rebolz's chic costumes, for the matrons as well as for their trendy kids, are well executed, and Ben Stanton has lit everything just beautifully. And the play's final image of a two-sided Kadinsky painting, which cleverly reinforces Guare's thesis, is sure to linger long after the curtain drops.



Karen Ziemba and Samuel Stricklen  
in *Six Degrees of Separation*  
(© Craig Schwartz)

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## Two decades on, 'Six Degrees' still potent at Old Globe

ANNE MARIE WELSH  
FOR THE NORTH COUNTY TIMES

Nearly 20 years after its New York premiere, John Guare's dazzling "Six Degrees of Separation" remains funny, provocative, moving — and pleasantly disorienting, at least in the brisk, well-cast zinger of a production directed by Trip Cullman and thoughtfully designed by Andromache Chalfant for the Old Globe.

Jump-cutting through time, place and tone, Guare's comedy engages a breathtaking array of themes: the role of chance in human destiny; the sadness beneath the hollow striving of wealthy New Yorkers; the corruption of ideals in the art world; the decline of Broadway into shallow spectacle; the gullibility of celebrity-seekers rich and poor; the gaps between parents and children, whites and blacks, gays and straights, husbands and wives.

The satiric portions of the play, a late '80s update on Tom Wolfe's "Bonfire of the Vanities," ping with one-liners that place Guare in the company of such true wits as Oscar Wilde and Noel Coward.

Yet the Globe production also touches the script's one heartstring, a vibration that gives the play its deeper resonance — and its title. In the lead role of Ouisa Kittridge, middle-aged white wife of a fatuous New York art dealer, Tony-winner Karen Ziemba forges a real, wonder-filled bond with Paul, an enigmatic black con man. She's come to care more for him than for husband or son because he's reconnected her to — for lack of a better word — her soul.

Ziemba plays Ouisa a mite soft and sweet for the early scenes of the play; there the character's dialogue suggests a brittle, wealth-loving striver as unthinking as her anxiety-driven husband. But as the action unfolds, the radiant dreaminess that won Ziemba a Tony for the dance musical "Contact" again serves her well. With Cullman's staging and Ben Stanton's malleable lighting underscoring her warmth, she projects an empathy for Paul that takes her back to her youthful love for art and for true relationships, uncontaminated by greed. He rekindles her belief in mystery, and she feels again the touch of Michaelangelo's God.

In those later scenes of the play's 90-minute joy ride, actor Samuel Stricklen creates a



PHOTO COURTESY OF  
CRAIG SCHWARTZ

Karen Ziemba, left, and Samuel Stricklen in "Six Degrees of Separation" at the Old Globe.

Paul worth knowing — a bright, gay, energetic outsider who, had he been differently connected, might have landed far from the Riker's Island cell where he's being incarcerated at play's end.

Guare took his inspiration for the plot from a real-life hoax perpetrated by David Hampton, who in 1983 duped his way into the homes of various rich New Yorkers (they're pictured in the Globe program) by pretending to be a friend of their college-age children. He was convicted and imprisoned for attempted

### REVIEW

#### "Six Degrees of Separation"

When: 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; through Feb. 15

Where: Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

Tickets: \$29-\$66 (for mature audiences)

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Web: www.theoldglobe.org

burglary, though not for malicious impersonation. Later, he lost the suit he filed against Guare for "stealing" aspects of his life for the play.

Hampton should have been happy, rather than litigious, about this serious comedy: Paul may be a fraud, pretending to be the son of a movie star among other deceptions, but Guare depicts him as the rebel truth-teller who unmasks the fakery in others.

Ouisa's husband, Flan, can talk soulfully about the (symbolically) two-sided Kandinsky in his living room, even as he scoots nervously about whispering "\$2 million, \$2 million" — the money he must get from his billionaire dinner guest so both can turn an obscene profit selling a Cezanne that's come his way. Thomas Jay Ryan creates a Flan whose moods ricochet with his bank account. He seems proof positive of one character's observation: The seeming rich are no different

from the rest of us — just living "hand to mouth on a higher plateau."

When Paul interrupts the meeting of moneybags Geoffrey with Ouisa and Flan, the interloper claims to have been wounded and robbed nearby. Spotting their building, he has turned to the Kittridges for help because he knows their son and daughter at Harvard.

Paul charms the trio with a virtuoso monologue describ-

ing his stolen thesis on "Catcher in the Rye." He claims to have decied that assassins modeled themselves on the defiant Holden Caulfield, the Salinger hero who spots the fakes and climbs all around him. On and on Paul goes, citing Samuel Beckett, lecturing his enthralled hosts on the "death of the imagination,"

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and asking, "why has imagination become a synonym for style?"

Stricklen's delivery of Paul's monologue lacked conviction on opening night. But it's not so much the intellectual posturing and the tasty, improvised meal the character prepares that seduces these upper East Siders and their billionaire guest. They fall for his claim to be the son of Sidney Poitier because they hope the son can get them all cast as extras in the movie version of "Cats."

Screwball complications emerge when friends Larkin (Donald Sage Mackay) and Kitty (Kelliher Walsh) arrive with the wonderful news of their similar future in film. The few quick, bold strokes with which Guare creates this couple and an array of privi-

leged unhappy children are one of the chief delights of the play — and this production.

Walsh nails the confidently strutting one-upmanship of the ebulliently wealthy Kitty, while Mackay creates an equal absurdity of her tag-along husband — until they learn of Paul's deception. Then in one swift brilliantly timed revelation of a possible affair, their relationship breaks hilariously apart.

Other fireworks occur in the younger generation — a gallery of five disaffected youngsters who disapprove of their parents for reasons too numerous to count, from the loss of a pink shirt to deeper matters. Sloan Grenz is positively scary as the raging son of a duped doctor (James Fine). Vivian Font is especially good as Tess, the privileged Kittridge daughter who learns how Paul got his information about his hapless victims — and who demands at-

tention in ever-more outrageous ways from parents who never gave her the right kind of it.

Also strong: Kevin Hoffman as the "contemporary Henry Higgins" who schooled Paul in the care and feeding of the rich, and Joaquin Perez-Campbell, double cast as a nude hustler who flees Paul's bed and as the innocent Utah transplant who arrives with his girlfriend (Catherine Gowl) to pursue Big Apple theatrical dreams.

The young couple's encounter with Paul brings one of those remarkable shifts of tone so stunning for audiences in this and other Guare plays such as "The House of Blue Leaves" and "Landscape of the Body." Though some of the easier jokes in "Six Degrees of Separation" (the roller skating in "Starlight Express," for instance) have become dated, Guare's inventive dramaturgy and singular voice remain fresh as ever.

## Characters in 'Six Degrees' look for middle ground

BY DIANA SAENGER  
Contributor

Since someone told Kevin Bacon in 1994 that he knew everyone, the Six Degrees of Separation phenomenon has become a film, game, organization and a play. John Guare's Obie-winning play "Six Degrees of Separation" takes to the stage Jan. 10 to Feb. 15 at The Old Globe. Directed by Trip Cullman, the play stars Broadway veteran and Tony Award-winning actress Karen Ziemba in the title role of Ouisa.

"Six Degrees" is about the high-class Kittredge family who lives in New York City and works hard at maintaining their social status. When an injured stranger shows up at their door while they are entertaining and claims to be a friend of one of their children, they let him in. At first they are charmed by this multi-faceted young man, but soon family members are not only questioning who he is, but their own identities and what they are really all about.

UCSD alumni Samuel

Stricklen plays the role of the stranger, Paul. His work includes international and national productions as well as La Jolla Playhouse's "Victor/Victoria," "Phantom," "Annie Get Your Gun" and "Tulane Summer." Stricklen understands the challenge he faces as a lead character in what is basically an ensemble piece.

"Paul lives in his own world and although everyone around him has their opinion about him, he has no outside eye," Stricklen said. "He's very much the antagonist and it's fascinating to see the effect he has on others. That's part of the great thing about John Guare, the writer. Because even though the main players — Ouisa (Karen Ziemba), Flan (Thomas Jay Ryan) and Paul — are present, there are so many other characters in this play who may be on stage for only five minutes yet there's a small play in each of their lines. The writing is that great."

Working with a large ensemble cast can be a chal-

### 'Six Degrees of Separation'

- Jan. 10 – Feb. 15
- The Old Globe
- 1363 Old Globe Way
- \$29-\$66
- (619) 234-5623
- [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

lenge for directors, but Stricklen found Cullman quite capable.

"He's one of the most patient directors I've worked with and very good at talking with the actors," Stricklen said. "One of the best things I've learned about acting is it's not about finding things right there in the moment but about discovery, and Trip is open to actors trying things on their own. I really trusted his judgment."

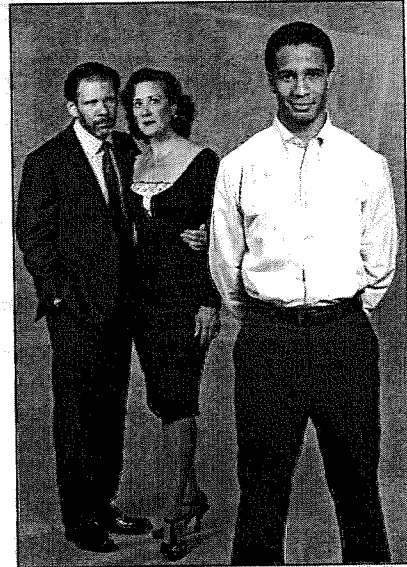
Stricklen has a good sense of his character, as he appeared in a few episodes of the 2006 TV series "Six Degrees." Yet he's still mystified by the universal theme

of the play.

"It seems that no matter where you are, there are five people somehow related to you," Stricklen said. "I was on Fifth Avenue in New York and eating next to a man who had a 17-year subscription to The Old Globe. He wanted to know all about this show, and we talked for quite a while."

That universal theme of connection runs through "Six Degrees," which offers extreme comedy as well as some dark moments as the story explores elements of race, class and sexuality. Stricklen also finds it full of imagination.

"That's one of the things I enjoy about my character," he said. "Paul goes where his imagination takes him in his search for his place in life. All of the characters in the play are trying to find the middle ground in their lives. I think that's what audiences respond to in this play — to think about their own dreams and aspirations and what they want to do with the rest of their lives."



Thomas Jay Ryan (Flan), Karen Ziemba (Ouisa) and Samuel Stricklen (Paul) star in The Old Globe's "Six Degrees of Separation." CRAIG SCHWARTZ



## Sidney's Son

*They aren't wealthy, a character says, just "hand-to-mouth on a higher plateau."*

**F**lan and Ouisa Kittridge verge on having it all: two children at Harvard, one at Groton; a grand Fifth Avenue apartment near Jackie O's; a couple of Mark Rothkos and a two-sided Kandinsky on the walls; and, thanks to an unexpected intervention, they're about to become millionaires. It's the American Dream, Upper East Side version. Flan (ders) and (L)ouisa will be rich enough to barricade themselves not only from the outside world, but also, in John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation*, from within. Their imaginations will never threaten them again.

Enter Paul, a gay, African-American young man, knifed and beaten. Somehow he made it through apartment security. He broke that social barrier the way Sidney Poitier became the "Jackie Robinson of films." Poitier, who grew up poor in the Bahamas, sat on the shore, Paul tells us, and conjured up "the kind of worlds that were on the other side" and what he'd "do in them." Paul convinces Flan and Ouisa he's Sidney Poitier's son. Is he, or has he found, like Poitier, ways to thrive in other worlds?

Guare based *Six Degrees* on an actual event. "Somebody sent me a clipping...about a kid," named David Hampton, "whose hustle was pretending to be Sidney Poitier's son." The fiction granted Hampton access to homes he couldn't enter otherwise and from which he stole abundantly. What the Kittridges don't know: Poitier had daughters but no son.

Guare didn't invent the concept, but like Joseph Heller's "Catch-22," he authored a popular phrase. According to Ouisa, everyone on earth is only six people away from everyone else, "six degrees of separation" between you, say, and Kevin Bacon (a game, "Six Degrees of Kevin Ba-

con," based on the concept). Ouisa's both thrilled by such small-world possibilities and frustrated "because you have to find the right six people to make the connection."

Paul may not be Poitier's son, but he's become a great actor. He can converse about art with art dealers, prepare a gourmet dish from scraps, and even convince upscale New Yorkers he can land them

roles in a film version of *Cats* — as humans. Throughout *Six Degrees*, Guare slams Upper East Side materialism; his funniest shot — *Cats* has no human roles — shows them easily duped and toe-deep shallow. They aren't wealthy, a character says, just "hand-to-mouth on a higher plateau."

A Pygmalion-like friend taught Paul how to pass as upper class. It only took Paul three months to become "the most eagerly sought after young man in the East." Although he's a quick study/genius, Paul's trapped too. He can only gain acceptance as someone else.

At the Old Globe, even when you know that Paul's a fraud, Samuel Stricklen plays him well enough to make you wonder if Sidney Poitier might have had an illegitimate son. Guare stuffs Paul's dialogue with lectures — about the imagination, drama's emotionally "paralyzed" characters, a Poitier bio, violence in Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. Stricklen handles these lengthy patches without becoming preachy (no mean feat). His best work comes when Paul connects to the sixth degree and the real Paul peeks through the mask.

Guare said *Six Degrees* should move like the wind. Though his early scenes threaten to crack the sound barrier, director Trip Cullman shows a good sense of the play's collage-like form —



Karen Ziemba, Thomas Jay Ryan in *Six Degrees of Separation*

**Six Degrees of Separation**, by John Guare  
**Old Globe Theatre**, Simon Edison Centre for the Performing Arts, Balboa Park  
**Directed by Trip Cullman**; cast, Karen Ziemba, Thomas Jay Ryan, Tony Torn, Samuel Stricklen, Steven Marzoff, Joaquin Perez-Campbell, Kelliher Walsh, Donald Sage Mackay, Vivian Font, Jordan McArthur, Kevin Hoffmann, James Eckhouse, Sloan Grenz, Andrew Dahl, Catherine Gow; scenic design, Andromache Chalfant; costumes, Emily Rebholtz; lighting, Ben Stanton; sound, Paul Peterson  
 Playing through February 15; Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday at 7:00 p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. 619-234-5623.

comedy, farce, infomercial, direct address, drama, each tumbling out of the other — and how to bring the script's 17 characters, most of them stand-and-deliver cameos, to life, especially Flan and Ouisa's three another-planet-alienated children.

The Kandinsky painting, which hovers over the scene throughout, has two sides: on one, Rubin's Cube formality; the other, says Guare, "wild and vivid." Thomas Jay Ryan's comical Flan, who tries to keep things "abstract," is side one: controlled, formal, with the reality-avoidance instincts of an ostrich. Karen Ziemba's open, vulnerable Ouisa's side two (reflected in Emily Rebholtz's color-burst costumes). As the play

progresses, and Ouisa's understanding grows, Ziemba traces a touching arc from a wide-eyed comic character to near-tragic awareness.

Andromache Chalfant's set starts out posh — the Kittridges' art-rich apartment, with sunken living room downstage — then separates, exposing Paul's world of graffiti on grime-gray concrete. Large sliding doors make the set resemble a fortress, though not as impregnable as Flan would prefer.

Like the Kandinsky painting, the play's title cuts two ways. By the end the characters aren't just six degrees away from potential soul mates; except for Paul and Ouisa, they're at least that far removed from their authentic selves. ■

**THEATER REVIEW**  
 JEFF SMITH



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**San Diego Arts**  
**'Six Degrees of Separation' at The Old Globe**

*[insert Kevin Bacon joke here]*  
 By Jennifer Chung Klam  
 Posted on Sun, Jan 18th, 2009  
 Last updated Sun, Jan 18th, 2009



One of the strange incongruities of 21st century life is that we have simultaneously become more and less connected with each another. We send instant messages to the coworker in the neighboring cubicle. We have 1,273 “friends” in Facebook but few quality relationships. We Twitter the minutia of our daily lives into the ether, and hide behind avatars in the online world.

A lot has changed in the intervening years since John Guare penned “Six Degrees of Separation” in 1990, pre-Google and pre-IMDB. The playwright presciently tapped into contemporary issues of identity and connectedness in an increasingly shrinking yet impersonal world. The play spawned a film starring Will Smith and, more famously, the Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon game. Even if the Globe’s current staging doesn’t quite fill out the characters and their enigmatic and sometimes exasperating relationships, it still boasts a strong cast in a striking and engaging production.

The play’s title refers to the social theory that suggests “everybody on this planet is separated by only six other people,” according to one character. Guare based the play on actual events that took place in the early 1980s, when a charismatic young black man conned his way into the homes and lives of affluent New Yorkers.

In “Six Degrees,” art dealer Flan Kittredge and his wife Ouisa are entertaining their ridiculously wealthy South African friend (Tony Torn), from whom they are also trying to extract \$2 million for an art deal.

Then Paul stumbles into their home with a bloody shirt and a story about being mugged in Central Park. The Kittredges quickly sympathize and are soon smitten by their young guest, who helps them lock in the \$2 mil and connects with them in a way their own children have not.

Paul claims not only to be the son of Sidney Poitier, but to know their kids as a fellow student at Harvard. As it turns out, the Kittredges are just the latest to be taken in by Paul’s charm and the possibility of being an extra in the movie version of the musical “Cats.”

Samuel Stricklen’s Paul captivates his well-heeled targets (and the audience) with personal stories of Poitier, a dissertation on the importance of imagination, and his thesis on why the J.D. Salinger novel “Catcher in the Rye” became a manifesto for assassins of celebrities. Stricklen exhibits the character’s duality, exuding charisma and poise but also betraying a calculating nature and mental instability.

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The play ultimately focuses on Ouisa, who allows herself to be affected by the experience in a way that the others – shallow, egocentric, money-grubbing “starfuckers” – do not. Through Paul she sees the empty falseness of her own life, and she resists turning him into an amusing dinner anecdote. Tony Award-winner Karen Ziemba deftly delineates Ouisa’s emotional arc, from ideal trophy wife hostess to recognizing the pretenses that inform her life.

Thomas Jay Ryan is glibly unaffected as Flan. Joaquin Perez-Campbell plays a naïve newcomer from Utah who gets seduced and robbed, while Catherine Gowl plays his wary girlfriend. Actors from the Globe and USD’s training program play the privileged college kids, overstating the melancholy self-importance of youth, often humorously if unrealistically.

The music – including New Order’s “Blue Monday” and the, well, aptly timed “Master and Servant” by Depeche Mode – hints at the 1986 setting, while costumes also capture the alternately garish and bland looks of the ‘80s.

The theme of duality is suggested most overtly in the double-sided Wassily Kandinsky painting – one side a dark canvas of geometric shapes, the other wildly splashed with vibrant colors. Andromache Chalfant’s set cracks open Flan and Ouisa’s well-manicured and sterile apartment to reveal a gritty street scene just outside.

Trip Cullman’s snappy direction speeds through the play’s 90 minutes of literature, art and sociology, and may leave some audiences yearning for a breath, or deeper characterizations. But perhaps it makes sense for a play about shifting identities and tenuous human connections not to linger or delve too deeply.

**Dates** : Tues.-Sun., through Feb. 15  
**Organization** : The Old Globe  
**Phone** : 619-23-GLOBE  
**Production Type** : Play  
**Region** : Balboa Park  
**URL** : <http://www.theoldglobe.org>  
**Venue** : Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego

*About the author: Jennifer Chung Klam is an editor at The Daily Transcript and a freelance arts and culture writer. More by this author.*

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# SAN DIEGO DAILY TRANSCRIPT

January 30, 2009

## Globe's 'Six Degrees' sheds light on identity through art

### Theater Review

By Jenna Long

SAN DIEGO — In our present reality of Bernie Madoff stealing investors' fortunes and lay-offs forcing some middle-class families to line up at food banks, a play about characters who identify themselves by financial worth and social status seems as relevant today as it was in 1986, when the story takes place.

"Six Degrees of Separation" — now playing at the Old Globe Theatre — is based on the real-life story of David Hampton, a con man who posed as Sidney Poitier's son to receive lodging and short-lived friendships from vapid New York socialites.

Paul (Samuel Stricklen) quickly wins the hearts and attention of Ouisa and Flan Kittredge (Karen Ziemba and Thomas Jay Ryan) and by claiming he knows their children — acknowledged, of course, by their Harvard education — because the Kittredges have no personal link to their offspring but blood and money. Really, it seems the only bond the couple has between themselves is money; the single minimally-intimate moment they share comes on the heels of acquiring \$2 million for an art deal.

Andromache Chalfant's visually appealing set cleverly represents superficial wealth with an array of bright, expensive art that largely consists of one- and two-tone paintings, which seem more functional

for filling wall space than provoking inspiration.

Ironically, the two paintings of real value to the Kittridges are a watercolor of their dog — the only piece not facing outward as a status symbol — and a two-sided Kandinsky masterpiece looming overhead, representing the play's themes of identity and duality.

"There are two sides to every story," James Eckhouse's Dr. Fine explains to his son Doug (Sloan Grenz), who performs the most humorous

outburst of the show in expressing his parental hatred.

Ziemba's Ouisa does a poignant job of displaying her own duality — shifting from a hilariously manic hostess to a restless dreamer who starts to imagine a more fulfilling life because of what Paul has shown her.

Ryan's Flan and Stricklen's Paul are played so compellingly, the audience might leave

See Theater Review on 4A

## Theater Review

*Continued from Page 3A*

wondering who's the real fraud: Paul, a pseudo-chameleon of identities, readily admits that he believes "the imagination is merely another phrase for what is most uniquely us," while Flan, the emotionally-detached art dealer, claims he "felt so close to the paintings," perhaps because he shares their flashy exterior with nothing of substance underneath the facade.

"Six Degrees" is mostly enjoyable because the script is filled with meaningful, engaging dialogue delivered by well-casted actors who quickly win and hold the audience's attention for an ideal 90-minute length. The subject matter stays fresh and moves quickly, thanks to Trip Cullman's tal-

ented direction, with just the right amount of time for viewers to get wrapped up in a good story and then get out before it gets old.

In making its points, the production goes slightly overboard with in-your-face symbolism — as when Paul and the two-sided Kandinsky painting simultaneously rotate. But then again, these alter egos are vital in representing the themes of chaos and control that flow throughout the play — as identity becomes not who you are, but what you can get people to believe.

"Six Degrees of Separation" is playing through Feb. 15 at the Old Globe Theatre.

[jenna.long@sddt.com](mailto:jenna.long@sddt.com)

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# LA JOLLA VILLAGE NEWS

February 5, 2009

## STAGE PAGE

### 'Six Degrees': from stage to film to stage

By CHARLENE BALDRIDGE | VILLAGE NEWS

Currently on San Diego stages are two plays by masterful living playwrights John Guare and John Patrick Shanley. Both plays were made into highly successful films, one of them (Shanley's "Doubt") an obvious Oscar contender playing in local cinemas.

Seen at the Old Globe the evening of Jan. 17, Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation" resonates differently but no less mightily than it did when seen nearly two decades ago on stage and screen. The 1990 Broadway play led to a 1993 film that first brought young sitcom star Will Smith to serious public attention.

The core metaphor of this dense 90-minute roller coaster of a play, staged here by Trip Cullman in his Globe directorial debut, is contained in the last words spoken by protagonist Ouisa Kittredge about the Kandinsky work that hangs in her posh New York apartment: "The Kandinsky ... it's painted on two sides." Though no solutions to any of the mysteries presented in the play are spelled out, this line ties up everything neatly. Just as the Kandinsky has two sides, so do human beings.

The other key in the Globe's



PHOTO BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ

Karen Ziemba as Ouisa in The Old Globe's production of "Six Degrees of Separation," through Feb. 15 in Balboa Park.

dazzling production is handed over by Andromache Chalfant's astonishing scenic design, which opens up, as a dream might, to reveal unexplored vistas that could represent possibilities for a less proscribed and plastic life for the awakened protagonist, Ouisa Kittredge.

Ouisa (the magnificent Karen Ziemba) is married to Flan (Thomas Jay Ryan), an art dealer who specializes in selling privately owned masterworks out of

their fancy Manhattan living room. A wealthy South African client (Tony Torn) arrives for pre-dinner cocktails when suddenly the bleeding and shaken Paul arrives. He is portrayed by UCSD MFA graduate Samuel Stricklen, remembered in numerous UCSD productions, including Darko Tresnjak's "La Dispute."

Paul, who gets more and more intriguing, is a young African-

SEE 'SIX DEGREES,' Page 12

## SIX DEGREES

CONTINUED FROM Page 10

American who says he was victimized in a Central Park mugging in which he lost his luggage and his wallet. He claims to be a Harvard classmate of the Kittredges' children and furthermore, the son of Sidney Poitier, whom he is to meet the next morning for breakfast.

Obviously of high intelligence, Paul cooks a gourmet meal for the trio of sophisticates. He speaks intelligently of artists

and then delivers a heady theoretical discourse about the novel "Catcher in the Rye." Of course Paul is invited to stay overnight. The illusion is shattered the next morning when Ouisa discovers him with a naked male prostitute (beautiful Joaquin Perez-Campbell, seen recently, but not so completely, in "Back Back Back").

The Kittredges are not the only ones in their smart set duped by Paul, hence the "six degrees of separation" comparison. Over the course of the play, in direct address and in played-

out scenes, the audience learns that all is not as it appears in marital and parent-child relationships, hence the duality represented by the Kandinsky, which is geometrical on one side and chaotic on the other. The ensemble of young and older people is quite impressive, as are the three leads, but it's the set that accompanies one home.

"Six Degrees of Separation" continues through Feb. 15 at the Old Globe in Balboa Park. For tickets and information, visit [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org) or call (619) 23-GLOBE. ☺

# SAN DIEGO CITY BEAT

January 28, 2009

## THEATER



Ouisa and Flan Kittredge (Karen Ziemba and Thomas Jay Ryan) face an identity crisis.

## Family matter

GLOBE'S *SIX DEGREES* NEEDS A SLIGHTLY SCIENTIFIC TOUCH, BUT IT'S PRETTY GOOD

BY MARTIN JONES WESTLIN

The wife of the man who once stood a nasty cough away from the presidency has said she found something incredible in compiling family research for a memoir. Lynne Cheney told MSNBC in late 2007 that she'd learned her husband and the current president are eighth cousins, calling the discovery "such an amazing American story, that one ancestor... could be responsible down the family lines for lives that have taken such different and varied paths as Dick's and Barack Obama." Further research reportedly shows that Obama and ex-President Bush are distantly related, as well. From this end, both instances serve as incontrovertible evidence that man is indeed descended from a bunch of frickin' apes.

I was reminded of that inherent truth upon seeing *Six Degrees of Separation*, John Guare's take on the idea that person A is connected to person B by a trail of six people at most, assuming that the two persons don't know each other. The theory dates to 1987 and has spawned lots of grass-roots interest, with Guare's 1990 play and the movie three years later at the heart of the phrase's pop-

ularity. The Old Globe Theatre liked the idea so much that it thought it'd have a go at things—and while I don't think the script includes enough social science to help establish a foundation, I eagerly give it up for Trip Cullman's crisp direction. Amid the madcap nature of it all, this show could dissolve into a parody of itself, but Cullman's deliberate hand keeps things readable, above-board and pretty damn quirky all night long.

The wayward Paul (Samuel Stricklen) is about to become an insider in an artsy-fartsy New York family, showing up at its doorstep injured and asking for help. He regales filthy-rich New York art dealers Ouisa and Flan Kittredge (Tony winner Karen Ziemba and Thomas Jay Ryan) with persuasive tales of his past, specifically those about his famous father. But pretty soon, the stories diverge and lead everybody involved to doubt his identity, along with their own. Our lowborn sense of ourselves, it seems, leads us to create a rash of false identities and games to elevate our standing in others' eyes.

Such fakery, Guare seems to say, is no match for our closeness and the dilemmas it creates—as one character says, it's "like Chinese water torture that we're so close, because you have to find the right six people to make the right connection." Guare introduces a parade of people to that end, with Cullman holding sway over every nuance. Hard to believe we're so interconnected amid such a motley illustration of personalities, but Cullman's solid grasp on each makes us want to believe it, and Guare's deft reflections take it from there.

While the six-degrees theory has never been proven, its clinical origins have fueled a certain curiosity in pop culture (actor Kevin Bacon even launched a website, [Sixdegrees.org](http://Sixdegrees.org), advancing the concept of our interrelatedness in the name of charity). Guare chooses to forgo that link to science; the characters might have been better defined if he'd somehow included it in their reflections. As such, there's a certain "gee-whiz" color at some intervals that call for quiet sobriety.

But Ziemba and Ryan are at their best, and Andromache Chalfant's set is an exemplary blend of the conceptual and the real. The social scientist in me wanted more out of this, but his actor-director counterpart liked it just fine. CB

*This review is based on the matinée performance of Jan. 18. Six Degrees of Separation runs through Feb. 15 at The Old Globe Theatre mainstage, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. \$29-\$66. 619-23-GLOBE, [www.oldglobe.org](http://www.oldglobe.org).*

Write to [marty@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:marty@sdcitybeat.com) and [editor@sdcitybeat.com](mailto:editor@sdcitybeat.com).

# SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

January 29, 2009

NIGHT & DAY

## PLAYBILL

### CRITIC'S CHOICE

**'Six Degrees of Separation'** 'Six Degrees of Separation' John Guare's twitchy, deeply layered 1990 comedy gets its San Diego premiere in high style under Trip Cullman's direction at the Globe. Tony-winner Karen Ziemba strikes the right blend of humor and regret as Ouisa, who (along with her art-dealer husband, played by Thomas Jay Ryan) has taken in a young man (Samuel Strickler) claiming to be the son of Sidney Poitier. It's a con, but the clash of these characters' worlds yields fascinating (and funny) commentary on identity, race and art. (James Hebert) *The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Through Feb. 15. 619-234-5623, the-oldglobe.org. \$29-\$66.*

**'Doubt: A Parable'** "Doubt." Todd Salovey directs a beautifully modulated treatment of John Patrick Shanley's richly ambiguous Pulitzer Prize-winning play. Rosina Reynolds is the heart of a fault four-person ensemble as Sister Aloysius, a zealous yet witty Catholic school principal who suspects the

genial parish priest of molesting an eighth-grade boy. Because the play is set in 1964, and the boy is the school's first African-American student, "Doubt" portrays not only individuals in conflict but America at the cusp of profound change. Intimate and understated, the Rep production wins hands-down over the recent Hollywood film. San Diego Repertory Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, downtown. Through Feb. 8. (619) 544-1000, sdrep.org. \$25-\$53. (Janice Steinberg) *Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, Downtown-Gaslamp. Through Feb. 8. 619-544-1000, sdrep.org. \$18-\$47.*

**'The Dresser'** 'The Dresser' Ronald Harwood's bittersweet backstage portrait of a London theater during the Blitz has an ace cast to match David Ellenstein's sensitive direction. The matchless Jonathan McMurtry plays a proud but faltering Shakespearean actor, and Sean Sullivan is his fervently loyal dresser. It's a funny, affecting and understated production, with some of the best acting you'll see on local stages. (Hebert) *North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach.*

*Through Feb. 8, 858-481-1055, northcoastrep.org. \$23-\$45.*



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 Theater News

## Karen Ziemba to Star in Old Globe's *Six Degrees of Separation*

By: **Brian Scott Lipton** · Dec 8, 2008 · San Diego

Tony Award winner Karen Ziemba will play Ouisa Kitredge in the Old Globe's production of John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* to run January 10-February 15. The production, which will open officially on January 15, will be directed by Trip Cullman.

In the play, the Kittredges, an Upper East Side couple, find a young man claiming to be a college friend of their children at their front door injured and asking for help. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns, they begin to question not only his identity but their own.

The cast features Thomas Jay Ryan (Flan), Donald Sage Mackay (Larkin), Keliher Walsh (Kitty), Tony Torn (Geoffrey), Samuel Stricklen (Paul), James Eckhouse (Dr. Fine), Joaquin Perez-Campbell (Rick/Hustler), Catherine Gowl (Elizabeth), Kevin Hoffmann (Ben), Sloan Grenz (Doug), Jordan McArthur (Woody), Andrew Dahl (Trent), Vivia Font (Tess), and Steven Marzolf (Doorman/Police/Detective). The creative team includes Andromache Chalfant (sets), Emily Rebholz (costumes), Ben Stanton (lighting), and Paul Peterson (sound).

Ziemba won the Tony Award for her performance in *Contact* and received Tony nominations for *Steel Pier*, *Never Gonna Dance*, and *Curtains*. Her other Broadway credits include *Chicago*, *Crazy For You*, *Teddy & Alice*, and *42nd Street*.

For tickets and information. call 619-23-GLOBE or visit [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org).



Karen Ziemba  
(© Joseph Marzullo/WENN)

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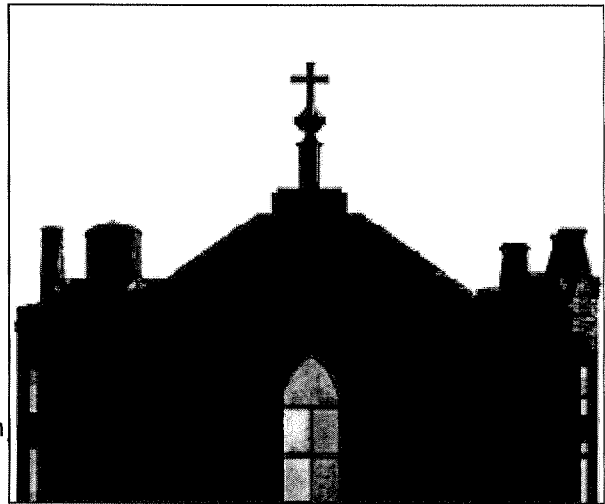
## Tony-Winner Ziemba Leads Cast for Guare's 'Six Degrees of Separation'

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by BWW News Desk



The Tony Award-winning Old Globe presents the Pulitzer Prize-winning Six Degrees of Separation by John Guare (The



House of Blue Leaves, Landscape of the Body), directed by Trip Cullman, to run in the Old Globe Theatre January 10 - February 15 (press opening: Thursday, January 15 at 8pm). Broadway veteran Karen Ziemba, who will play "Ouisa," won the Tony for the musical Contact and was nominated for her work in Steel Pier, Never Gonna Dance and Curtains!. Tickets are available

by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), or by visiting the Globe Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

The Kittredges' lives revolve around the high-stakes world of the New York art scene, where the appearance of success is everything. One evening as they are entertaining at their Upper East Side home, a young man claiming to be a college friend of their children shows up at their front door injured and asking for help. He is a charming young man who enchants the couple with a home-cooked gourmet meal and regales them with stories of his famous father. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns, they begin to question not only his identity but their own. A hit on Broadway that became an acclaimed motion picture with Will Smith, Stockard Channing, and Donald Sutherland, this intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance.

The cast of Six Degrees of Separation features Thomas Jay Ryan as "Flan," Karen Ziemba as "Ouisa," Donald Sage Mackay as "Larkin," Keliher Walsh as "Kitty," Tony Torn as "Geoffrey," Samuel Stricklen as "Paul," James Eckhouse as "Dr. Fine," Joaquin Perez-Campbell as "Rick/Hustler," Catherine Gowl as "Elizabeth," Kevin Hoffmann as "Ben," Sloan Grenz as "Doug,"

Jordan McArthur as "Woody," Andrew Dahl as "Trent," [Vivia Font](#) as "Tess" and Steven Marzolf as "Doorman/Police/Detective."

The creative team includes [Trip Cullman](#), director; Andromache Chalfant, scenic design; Emily Rebholz, costume design; [Ben Stanton](#), lighting design; [Paul Peterson](#), sound design; Diana Moser, stage manager.

[John Guare](#) (Playwright) is the Obie and New York Drama Critics Circle Award-winning playwright of such plays as *House of Blue Leaves*, *Six Degrees of Separation* (which won London's Olivier Award as Best Play and for which he also wrote the screenplay), *Landscape of the Body*, *A Few Stout Individuals*, as well as his Oscar-nominated screenplay for Louis Malle's *Atlantic City*. He won a Tony for his libretto to the musical *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and was nominated for a Tony for his play *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun* and his libretto to *Sweet Smell of Success*. His adaptation of *His Girl Friday* premiered to great acclaim at London's National Theater. He co-edits the *Lincoln Center Theater Review*, teaches playwriting at Yale School of Drama, is a council member of the Dramatists Guild, a trustee of PEN America and received the 2004 Gold Medal in Drama from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The NYShakespeare Festival/Public Theater will produce his new play, *A Free Man of Color*, next season.

[Trip Cullman](#) (Director: *Six Degrees of Separation*) most recently directed [South Coast Repertory's](#) critically-acclaimed world premiere of [Richard Greenberg's](#) *The Injured Party*. He has directed numerous acclaimed off-Broadway plays, including *The Drunken City* and *Manic Flight Reaction* at [Playwrights Horizons](#), [Terrence McNally's](#) *Some Men at Second Stage Theatre*, *The Wooden Brecks* at the [Lucille Lortel Theatre](#); *Dog Sees God* and *Last Sunday in June* at Century Center for the Performing Arts, and *Roulette* at the [John Houseman Theatre](#). His regional credits include *The Petersons Project* and [Keith Huff's](#) *A Steady Rain* at New York Stage & Film, and [Lauren Weedman's](#) *Rash* at the Empty Space Theatre, Seattle. Cullman trained at the Yale School of Drama and is an Associate Artist at The Play Company.

[Karen Ziemba](#) is making her debut at The Old Globe. ELSEWHERE: *Much Ado About Nothing*, Shakespeare Theatre, D.C./Hartford Stage; *House And Garden*, Geva Theatre; *Leading Ladies*, Ford's Theatre; *The Three Penny Opera*, Williamstown Theatre Festival; *The Opposite Of Sex*, Magic Theatre. Broadway: *Contact*, (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle Awards); *Curtains* (Outer Critics Circle Award, Tony Nom.); *Never Gonna Dance* (Outer Critics Circle Award, Tony Nom.); *Steel Pier* (Tony Nom.), Chicago, *Crazy For You*, *A Chorus Line*, 42nd Street. Off-Broadway: *And The World Goes 'Round* (Drama Desk Award), *I Do! I Do!* (Drama Desk Nom.). New York City Opera: *110 In The Shade*, *The Most Happy Fella*. Tv & Film: *The Producers*, *Scrubs*, all three *Law & Order* series, *The Kennedy Center Honors*, and for PBS, *My Favorite Broadway: The Leading Ladies*, *Gershwin At 100* and [Stephen Sondheim: A Celebration At Carnegie Hall](#).

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**Tony Winner Karen Ziemba to Star in Six Degrees at Old Globe**

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By Kenneth Jones  
10 Dec 2008



Karen Ziemba

Broadway's Karen Ziemba will play Ouisa, the rich New Yorker who is uniquely touched by a con man who insinuates himself into her circle, in the new Old Globe Theatre production of John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation*.

Trip Cullman directs the revival, playing Jan. 10-Feb. 15, 2009, in San Diego. Opening night is Jan. 15. Ziemba won the Tony Award for her performance in the musical *Contact* and was nominated for her work in *Steel Pier*, *Never Gonna Dance* and *Curtains*.

In *Six Degrees*, according to Old Globe, "the Kittredges' lives revolve around the high-stakes world of the New York art scene, where the appearance of success is everything. One evening as they are entertaining at their Upper East Side home, a young man claiming to be a

college friend of their children shows up at their front door injured and asking for help. He is a charming young man who enchants the couple with a home-cooked gourmet meal and regales them with stories of his famous father. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns, they begin to question not only his identity but their own. A hit on Broadway that became an acclaimed motion picture with Will Smith, Stockard Channing, and Donald Sutherland, this intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance."





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Karen Ziembra and Samuel Stricklen

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Karen Ziemba  
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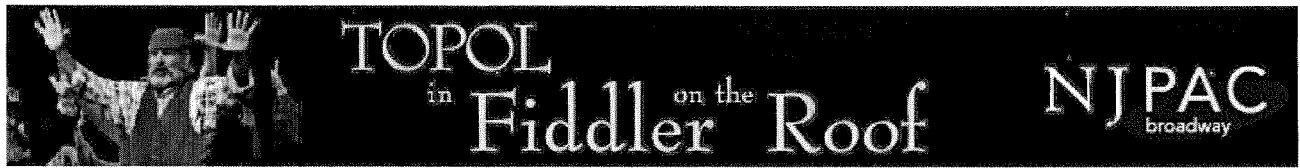
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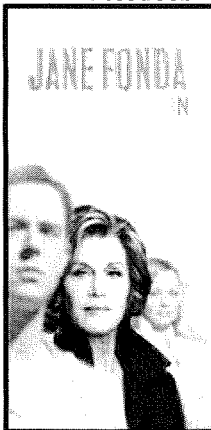
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Karen Ziembra stars in The Old Globe Theatre production of John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* in San Diego.

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The cast of *Six Degrees of Separation*

Photo by Craig Schwartz



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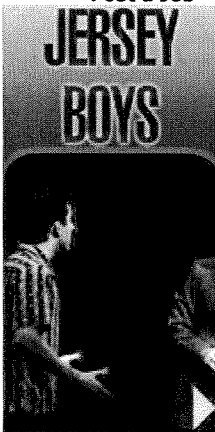
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**Old Globe's Six Degrees of Separation, With Ziemba, Opens Jan. 15**

By *Kenneth Jones*  
15 Jan 2009



Thomas Jay Ryan and Karen Ziemba  
photo by Craig Schwartz

Jan. 10 in San Diego.

Trip Cullman directs the revival, playing to Feb. 15. Ziemba won the Tony Award for her performance in the musical *Contact* and was nominated for her work in *Steel Pier*, *Never Gonna Dance* and *Curtains*.

\*

In *Six Degrees*, according to Old Globe, "the Kittredges' lives revolve around the high-stakes world of the New York art scene, where the appearance of success is everything. One evening as they are entertaining at their Upper East Side home, a young man [played by Samuel Stricklen] claiming to be a college friend of their children shows up at their front door injured and asking for help. He is a charming young man who enchants the couple with a home-cooked gourmet meal and regales them with stories of his famous father. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns,

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they begin to question not only his identity but their own. A hit on Broadway that became an acclaimed motion picture with Will Smith, Stockard Channing, and Donald Sutherland, this intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance."

The cast also features Thomas Jay Ryan as Ouisa's husband Flan, Donald Sage Mackay as Larkin, Keliher Walsh as Kitty, Tony Torn as Geoffrey, Samuel Stricklen as Paul, James Eckhouse as Dr. Fine, Joaquin Perez-Campbell as Rick/Hustler, Catherine Gowl as Elizabeth, Kevin Hoffmann as Ben, Sloan Grenz as Doug, Jordan McArthur as Woody, Andrew Dahl as Trent, Vivia Font as Tess and Steven Marzolf as Doorman/Police/Detective.

\*

The creative team includes Andromache Chalfant (scenic design); Emily Reholz (costume design); Ben Stanton (lighting design); Paul Peterson (sound design); and Diana Moser (stage manager).

Guare is the Obie and New York Drama Critics Circle Award-winning playwright of such plays as *House of Blue Leaves*, *Six Degrees of Separation* (which won London's Olivier Award as Best Play and for which he also wrote the screenplay), *Landscape of the Body*, *A Few Stout Individuals*, as well as his Oscar-nominated screenplay for Louis Malle's "Atlantic City." He won a Tony for his libretto to the musical *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and was nominated for a Tony for his play *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun* and his libretto to *Sweet Smell of Success*. His adaptation of *His Girl Friday* premiered to great acclaim at London's National Theater. The New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater will produce his new play, *A Free Man of Color*, next season.

Cullman most recently directed South Coast Repertory's critically acclaimed world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *The Injured Party*. He has directed numerous Off-Broadway plays, including *The Drunken City* and *Manic Flight Reaction* at Playwrights Horizons, Terrence McNally's *Some Men* at Second Stage Theatre, *The Wooden Brecks* at the Lucille Lortel Theatre; *Dog Sees God* and *Last Sunday in June* at Century Center for the Performing Arts.

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The cast of *Six Degrees of Separation*  
photo by Craig Schwartz



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**'SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION'** Nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, John Guare's provocative play earned four Tony nominations. This tale of affluence and deception stars Karen Ziemba and is directed by Trip Cullman. It runs through Feb. 15 at the Old Globe in Balboa Park. Tickets are \$29-\$66. *Craig Schwartz*

# THE RAGE

February 2009

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## **The Identity and Imagination of *Six Degrees of Separation***

I am four degrees of separation from Albert Einstein [You see, my friend (1) her father (2), well, his friend (3) knew Einstein personally (4)]. And I feel only one degree of separation from our newly inaugurated President. I mean, I get e-mails with a subject line that says from Barack Obama. (The campaign has such good marketing)! So, the concept of *Six Degrees of Separation* isn't so electrifying as it was during its 1990 Broadway premiere—you know, before e-mail and facebook, wikipedia and even most cell phones.

But because the "It's A Small World" theme isn't such a new revelation, we can look beyond it, to find other gems in Playwright John Guare's work. And as Director Trip Cullman knows, there is a gold mine.

Thanks to strong characterization by Samuel Stricklen ("Paul"), the more prominent themes for our post-Internet world become identity and imagination. Through Stricklen's performance, *Six Degrees of Separation* asks audiences: Who do you imagine yourself to be? And is there a point, when, if you believe in your imagination enough, it becomes truth? The old you disappears? (Hey Internet junkies: Keep trying on new identities. Just build your character and attend a virtual party!)

At the same time, Tony Award winner Karen Ziemba's stunning performance as "Ouisa" shows us there is an extreme beauty in entering someone else's imaginary world, a beautiful madness. And then, how exciting her life became when she discovered his facade. All of their lives became consumed, as they went on a quest to discover, who is he really?

As is often the case, the Old Globe's quality of sets, costuming and casting is outstanding. I also appreciated the play's witty references to pop culture, classic literature and art. And if you are a fan of the original *90210*, then check out Brenda and Brandon's dad in the role of "Dr. Fine" (James Eckhouse).

I did have one issue toward the middle of the play. (Here's where my wife says, "You are such a lesbian-activist.") But personally I was annoyed that "Paul," the law-breaking con-artist just had to be 1. black and then 2. "caught" as a promiscuous gay. And point blank, I'm tired of the LGBT community and communities of color being linked to law-breaking. The story would have worked just as well if "Paul" had been a white hetero girl who knocked on the Kittredge's New York penthouse door. Although it's possible she would not have been as snappy a dresser. So, see the play and when you do, try to identify and imagine "Paul" as any young college student. *Six Degrees'* themes have the ability to transcend gender and race.

### **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION**

The Old Globe Theatre

Now playing through February 15

Box Office 619.234.5623



*Landscape of the Body*), directed by Trip Cullman, to run in the Old Globe Theatre January

for her work in *Steel Pier*, *Never Gonna Dance* and *Curtains!*

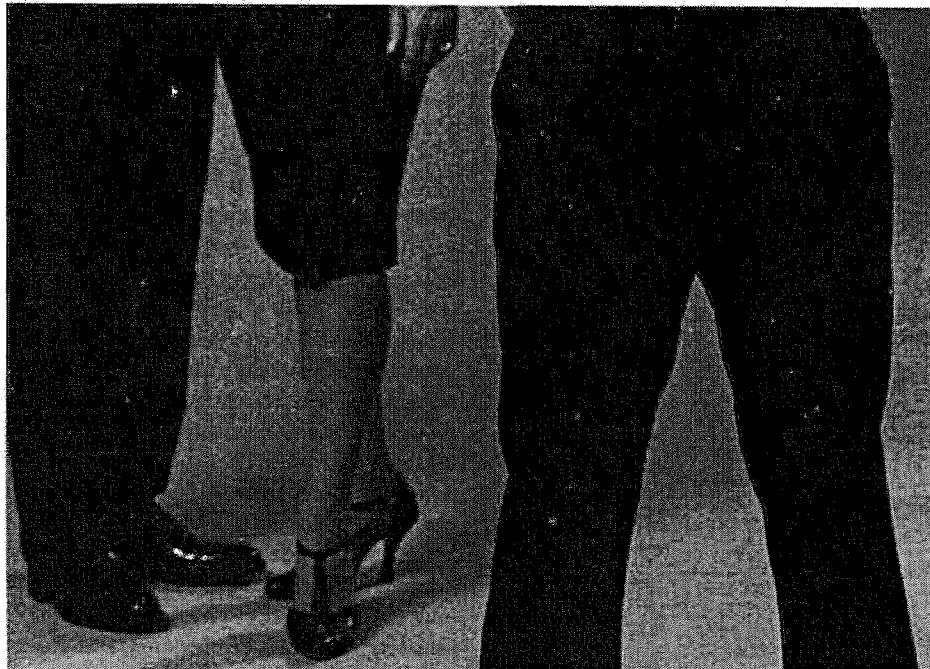


evening as they are entertaining at their Upper East Side home, a young man claiming to be a college friend of their children shows up at their front door injured and asking for help. He is a charming young man who enchants the couple with a home-cooked gourmet meal and regales them with stories of his famous father. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns, they begin to question not only his identity but their own. A hit on Broadway that became an acclaimed motion picture with Will Smith, Stockard Channing and Donald Sutherland, this intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance.

The cast of *Six Degrees of Separation* features Karen Ziemba as "Ouisa," Thomas Jay Ryan as "Flan," Donald Sage Mackay as "Larkin," Keliher Walsh as "Kitty," Tony Torn as "Geoffrey,"

# **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION**

## GLOWS AT THE OLD GLOBE



Samuel Stricklen as "Paul," James Eckhouse as "Dr. Fine," Joaquin Perez-Campbell as "Rick/Hustler," Catherine Gowl as "Elizabeth," Kevin Hoffmann as "Ben," Sloan Grenz as "Doug," Jordan McArthur as "Woody," Andrew Dahl as "Trent," Vivia Font as "Tess" and Steven Marzolf as "Doorman/Police/Detective."

The creative team includes Trip Cullman, director; Andromache Chalfant, scenic design; Emily Rebholz, costume design; Ben Stanton, lighting design; Paul Peterson, sound design; Diana Moser, stage manager.

**If You Go — SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION AT THE OLD GLOBE**, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park, January 10—February 15. Call 619.23.GLOBE, or go online at [TheOldGlobe.org](http://TheOldGlobe.org) or by visiting the Globe box office.

From left, Thomas Jay Ryan as "Flan," Karen Ziemba as "Ouisa" and Samuel Stricklen as "Paul" in The Old Globe's production of *Six Degrees Of Separation*. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

# THE BOTTOM LINE

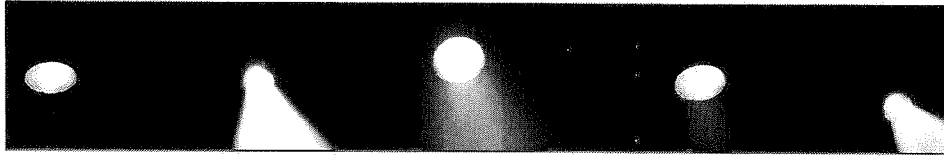
January 2, 2009

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## **TUESDAY JANUARY 13**

### ***Six Degrees of Separation* at the Old Globe**

A hit on Broadway that became an acclaimed motion picture with Will Smith, Stockard Channing and Donald Sutherland, this intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance. Beginning at 7 pm. For more information call 619. 234.5623 or go to [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).



SDJJ | what's goin' on

by eileen sondak

## ring in the new year with a fresh round of entertainment

It's a brand new year, and there's a new slate of theatrical offerings on the horizon. January means the return of the San Diego Opera, and this year the company has a solid gold season to follow last year's triumph. The San Diego Symphony is launching its Beethoven Festival this month, and many of the theater troupes in town are shifting into high gear. The Old Globe unwraps "Six Degrees of Separation" for its Main Stage and "Since Africa" for its second stage at the San Diego Museum of Art. North Coast Rep revives "The Dresser," and Cygnet Theatre presents the Southern California premiere of "Love Song," just to name a few of the exciting plays helping to ring in the new year.

The San Diego Opera moves back to the Civic Theatre Jan. 24 with its stunning season opener, Puccini's "Tosca." Opening night will kick off with a pre-opera dinner for major supporters, dubbed "Palazzo Promenade," in keeping with "Tosca's" Italian theme. After dinner at the US Grant Hotel, guests will head to the Civic to see "Tosca," featuring dynamic Sylvie Valayre and Marcus Haddock in leading roles. Then it's back to the Grant for the post-opera gala. If you can't make the big bash, you can still see "Tosca," a thrilling dramatic opera seeped in sex, politics, corruption and violence, through Feb. 4. Edoardo Muller will conduct. The rest of the opera season offers plenty of dramatic thrust and musical highlights. "Don Quixote" (last seen here in 1969) will bow in on Feb. 14 for a run through Feb. 22. This new San Diego Opera production stars Ferruccio Furlanetto and Dencye Graves and will be conducted by local favorite Karen Keltner. According to Artistic Director Ian Campbell, "This may be the sleeper of the season."

"Rigoletto" is due March 28-April 8. The Verdi masterpiece, with its hit parade of operatic tunes, will feature Lado Ataneli (one of the world's top baritones) in the title role. Benjamin Britten's "Peter Grimes" returns from a long absence April 18 - 26. John Copley will direct this staging, with the remarkable Anthony Dean Griffey in his signature role as the doomed fisherman.

"Madama Butterfly" (one of the best loved operas in the repertory) will take at the Civic May 9-17,

starring Patricia Racette and Carlo Ventre. Even if you've seen the classic many times, Campbell insists "we will discover things in Racette's interpretation which are unique." What a wonderful way to cap off a spectacular slate.

As Campbell reminded, "The season is well balanced. Three great classics, a British opera, which has no equal, and the rarely performed (nationally, at least) 'Don Quixote,' which will surprise many with its incredibly moving story. There's something for everyone, and for those who have never been to an opera, the three great Italian works are a good start."

The San Diego Symphony has a very special gift for local music lovers this month — the Beethoven Festival. For two weekends (Jan. 9-11 and 16-18) the Symphony will perform Beethoven programs, conducted by Jahja Ling. The first concert features the Triple Concerto, Symphony No. 1 and Choral Fantasy. Jeff Thayer will perform on violin, Jessie

■ **The San Diego Symphony has a very special gift for music lovers this month — the Beethoven Festival. For two weekends the Symphony will perform Beethoven programs, conducted by Jahja Ling.**

The San Diego Symphony delights music lovers with its Beethoven Festival Jan 9-11, 14 and 16-18, conducted by Jahja Ling.





SDJJ | what's goin' on



"Six Degrees of Separation" comes to the Old Globe beginning Jan. 10.

Change on piano for the First Symphony, and the San Diego Master Chorale will sing the Choral Fantasy. The second part of the Festival features pianist Anne-Marie McDermott as guest artist. The program will include Piano Concerto No. 1, Symphony No. 4 and Leonore Overture No. 3.

On Jan. 14, the venue changes to Qualcomm Hall for a Beethoven recital starring Thayer on violin and Maestro Ling on piano, along with violinist Jisun Yang, cellist Yao Zhao, and pianist McDermott. The exciting program features Violin Sonata No. 5 in F major (Opus 24, Spring), Piano Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor (Moonlight), and Archduke Trio Op. 97 in B-flat major. What a month for Beethoven aficionados!

Winter Pops has another treat in store for Symphony audiences (although the orchestra does not perform for this). On Jan. 25, the National Acrobats of China will

take over Symphony Hall for their unique brand of graceful acrobatics and spectacle.

The Old Globe's Main Stage is readying "Six Degrees of Separation" for a Jan. 10 opening. The contemporary masterpiece is about an Upper East Side couple and their charming (but uninvited) guest. The fascinating plot is full of twists and turns that become more and more disconcerting as the three-character play runs its course. "Six Degrees" abounds with intriguing human insights, but it's definitely aimed at mature audiences.

The Globe's Arena Stage at the Museum of Art will unveil "Since Africa" Jan. 24. The drama revolves around a newly widowed socialite and her daughter and their efforts to help a lost boy from Sudan relocate to a major American city. As the two women become familiar with the plight of the young man and his fellow immigrants, their perceptions of Africa, and their own experience of loss, are transformed. This moving piece will entertain audiences through March 8.

The San Diego Rep starts off the year with the local premiere of a recent Broadway hit, "Doubt." A touring production of the Pulitzer Prize-winning show stopped in San Diego last year, but it will be exciting to see the Rep's staging of this fascinating parable. Todd Salovey directs "Doubt," which is set to remain at the intimate Lyceum Space Jan. 10-Feb. 8. You won't just be an observer in

this fascinating drama of uncertainty: It's up to you to make the final verdict.

North Coast Repertory Theatre's "The Dresser" offers audiences a behind-the-scenes look at life in the theater (beginning Jan. 14). David Ellenstein directs this double portrait of an old actor-manager touring the provinces of England. "The Dresser" takes place during World War II, as German planes carry out the London Blitz. San Diego favorite Jonathan McMurtry will do the honors in this virtuoso role.

The San Diego Natural History Museum's exhibition of paintings and artwork by wildlife artist Robert Bateman is on view through the end of January. The show features 50 pieces by this acclaimed artist. "Tibet: Imagery by Kenneth Parker" ( slated to remain at the museum through March 1) showcases Parker's fine-art photographs of the culture and landscape of Tibet.

The Museum of Contemporary Art's "Human/Nature: Artists Respond to a Changing Planet," a show that investigates the relationships between natural environments and human culture through modern art, is being exhibited through Feb. 1. But you'll have to hurry to see "Weighing and Wanting: 25 years of Collecting" (in honor of director Hugh Davies' 25 year tenure at the museum) at the La Jolla facility before it closes Jan. 11.

The Reuben Fleet Science Center recently opened its newly renovated IMAX Theater, and it's now featuring three films: "Wild Ocean" (an explosive spectacle about the underwater struggle for survival), "Van Gogh: Brush with Genius" (a journey through the artist's nine year career, which spawned some of his most famous paintings), and "Animalopolis," a lighthearted and imaginary look at a variety of animals. The latter is a bonanza for the kids. All three IMAX films are settled in through spring.

Visitors to the Fleet can also explore hands-on exhibitions, such as "Tinkering," "So WATT! An Illuminating Look at Energy," the popular "Kid City," "Aging for All Ages," and "Animal Grossology" (which is due to close Jan. 4). ☼

# SAN DIEGO HOME & GARDEN

February 2009

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## THEATER

**The Scarlet Pimpernel**, Feb. 12-Apr. 26: With its moving ballads, hilarious dialogue, daring rescues and a thrilling sword-fight, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* promises to be a feast for the masses. Times/prices vary. Welk Resort Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Dr., Escondido. 888/802-7469. [www.welktheatre.com](http://www.welktheatre.com).

**Peter and the Starcatchers**, Feb. 13-Mar. 8: Reveals the wonderful story that precedes J. M. Barrie's beloved *Peter Pan*. Times/prices vary. La Jolla Playhouse, UCSD Campus, La Jolla. 858/550-1010. [www.lajollaplayhouse.org](http://www.lajollaplayhouse.org).

**The Sugar Syndrome**, Feb. 14-Mar. 8: Seventeen-year-old Dani surfs internet chat rooms, searching for someone who is honest and direct. What she finds is Tim, a man twice her age who thinks she is an eleven-year-old boy. For mature

audiences. Times/prices vary. Diversionsary Theatre. 858/598-7620. [www.moxiethatre.com](http://www.moxiethatre.com).

**Shipwrecked!** Feb. 21-Mar. 15: Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Donald Margulies' entertaining new play explores the seductive power of the tall tale and the desperate need that drives the tale-teller. Times/prices vary. North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Dr., Solana Beach. 858/481-1055. [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org).

**3 Redneck Tenors: A New Musical Adventure**, Feb. 22: Musical comedy featuring classically trained veteran artists from Broadway and world opera stages John Wilkerson, Alex Bumpas, Matthew Lord and Dinny McGuire. 6 p.m. \$25, \$40,

\$50. Balboa Theatre, 868 Fourth Ave., downtown. 619/570-1100. [www.sandiegothatres.org](http://www.sandiegothatres.org).

**The Threepenny Opera**, Feb. 28-Mar. 29: Experience the one-of-a-kind musical that revolutionized traditional opera. Times vary. \$25-\$53. Lyceum Theatre, Horton Plaza. 619/544-1000. [www.sandiegorep.com](http://www.sandiegorep.com).

**Doubt: A Parable**, through Feb. 8: This critically acclaimed deeply moving drama is a quiet indictment of the reverence for righteousness in American culture — a gripping mystery, rooted in suspicion. Times vary. \$25-\$53. Lyceum Theatre, Horton Plaza. 619/544-1000. [www.sandiegorep.com](http://www.sandiegorep.com).

**The Dresser**, through Feb. 8: Magnificent double portrait of an old actor-manager touring the provinces of England during the Second World War and the loyal dresser, who so devotedly serves him. Times/prices vary. North Coast Repertory Theatre, 987 Lomas Santa Fe Dr., Solana Beach. 858/481-1055. [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org).

**Music and Memories**, through Feb. 8: The "King of Bling" is back! Starring Wayland Pickard as Liberace. Times/prices vary. Welk Resort Theatre, 8860 Lawrence Welk Dr., Escondido. 888/802-7469. [www.welktheatre.com](http://www.welktheatre.com).

**Six Degrees of Separation**, through Feb. 15: A fascinating and compassionate play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance. For mature audiences. Times/prices vary. Old Globe Theatre. 619/23-GLOBE. [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org).

**Love Song**, through Feb. 22: Funny, enchanting and wonderfully touching offbeat comedy. Times vary. \$22-\$38. The Rolando Theatre, 6663 El Cajon Blvd., Ste. N. 619/337-1525. <http://cygnettheatre.com>.

**Since Africa**, through Mar. 8: The story of a "Lost Boy" of the Sudan and the two volunteers who try to help him acclimate to life in urban America. Times/prices vary. The Globe's Arena Stage at San Diego Museum of Art's James S. Copley Auditorium. 619/23-GLOBE. [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org).

Publication: Press Enterprise; Date: Jan 9, 2009; Section: The Guide; Page: S2



# AROUND SOUTHERN CAL

COMPILED BY **FIELDING BUCK** | THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

**ENDURING MUSIC:** Los Angeles Philharmonic conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen teams with pianist Emmanuel Ax on a program of Mozart and Brahms.

8 p.m. today, Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles. \$17-\$147. 323-850-2000, [www.laphil.com](http://www.laphil.com)

**FANTASY LAND:** Los Ange-

les Opera present's Mozart's "The Magic Flute," with a whimsical design by cartoonist Gerald Scarfe. It opens 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

Through Jan. 25, 135 North Grand Ave., Los Angeles. \$20-\$250. 213-672-8001, [www.losangelesopera.com](http://www.losangelesopera.com)

**NEW TAKE:** Deaf West Theatre is reviving the Stephen Schwartz musical "Pippin" in a production at the Mark Taper Forum that incorporates American Sign Language. Performances begin Thursday.

Through March 15, 135 N. Grand Ave., Los Angeles. \$20-\$80. 213-628-2772, [www.CenterTheatreGroup.org](http://www.CenterTheatreGroup.org)



**BENEFICIAL BARGAIN:** Discounts continue into the new year at Knott's Berry Farm. Through Feb. 1, visitors who bring a food donation for the Orange County Food Bank can get in the theme park for \$22.99, shaving off \$29 from the regular adult admission price.

8039 Beach Blvd. 714-220-6200,

Buena Park. [www.knotts.com](http://www.knotts.com)

**NEW MOVES:** "Stomp," featuring a cast of eight dancers making percussion music out of unconventional objects, is at the Orange County Performing Arts-Center through Sunday.

7:30 p.m. today and Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday; 1, 6:30 p.m. Sunday. 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa. \$20-\$60. 714-636-7433, [www.ocpac.org](http://www.ocpac.org)

**MORISSEY TRIBUTE:** Sweet and Tender Hooligans perform 7 p.m. Saturday at the House of Blues.

1530 S. Disneyland Drive, Anaheim. \$14.50. 714-779-2583, [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)



**BABY BOOM:** More than 30 baby chicks have been born to penguins at SeaWorld San Diego since November. Some are on display in the park's Penguin Encounter.

500 SeaWorld Drive, San Diego, \$65, ages 3-9 \$55, 1-800-380-3203

**STILL AT IT:** The Smothers

Brothers mix music, comedy and sibling rivalry in two shows at the California Center for the Arts.

2, 7 p.m. Sunday. 340 N. Escondido Blvd., Escondido. 800-988-4263, [www.artcenter.org](http://www.artcenter.org)

**SOCIAL SATIRE:** John Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation," the play that launched that whole Kevin Bacon thing, begins performances 8 p.m. Saturday at the Old Globe. For mature audiences.

Through Feb. 15, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. \$29-\$54. 619-234-6623, [www.theoldglobe.org](http://www.theoldglobe.org)

# LIFE AFTER 50

January 2009

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## 11 SUNDAY

**Emally Albrink.** The soprano sings Alban Berg's *Sieben fruehe Lieder*; John Musto's *Penelope*; Modest Mussorgsky's *The Nursery*; and John Harbison's setting of Walt Whitman poetry titled *Vocalism*. Raitt Recital Hall, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu. \$25. 310-506-4522. <http://arts.pepperdine.edu>.



**"Six Degrees of Separation."** This intriguing play probes the allure of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our own significance. For mature audiences. The Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Tues.-Sun. through Feb. 15. \$19-\$79. 619-234-5623. [theoldglobe.org](http://theoldglobe.org).





## THEATER

**"Annie"** Broadway San Diego presents this timeless tale about never giving up hope. *Opens Jan. 9, closes Jan. 11. Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave. \$20-\$61. (619) 220-TTXX, www.broadwaysd.com.*

**"Doubt: A Parable"** The San Diego REPeratory Theatre presents "Doubt: A Parable," a drama with a powerful story. The production will feature Rosina Reynolds, Monique Gaffney, Amanda Siton, and Doug Roberts. *Previews Jan. 10. Opens Jan. 16, closes Feb. 18. Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza. \$29-\$47. (619) 544-1000, www.sarep.org.*

**"Six Degrees of Separation"** Everything in the Kittredges' lives revolves around the New York art scene, where the appearance of success matters most. A stranger causes them to question their identities. *Opens Jan. 10,*



IT'S A HARD KNOCK LIFE "Annie" is running at the Civic Theatre from Jan. 9 to 11. PHIL MARTIN

*closes Feb. 15. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way. (619) 234-5623, www.theoldglobe.org.*

## MUSIC

**Augustin Hadelich, violinist** Program includes works by Stravinsky, Telemann and Saraste. Flutist Anatolia Maya Evarkiou-Kaku and the San Diego Youth Symphony will also perform. *2:30 p.m. Jan. 11. The Neurosciences Institute, 10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive, La Jolla. \$5-\$30. (858) 459-3728, www.lajollamusicociety.org.*

**Beethoven Festival** The San Diego Symphony presents this festival featuring music director Jahja Ling performing "Moonlight Sonata," piano soloist Anne-Marie McDermott performing Piano Concerto No. 1 and

Symphony No. 1 and Symphony No. 4. *Jan. 9-18. Copley Symphony Hall and Qualcomm Hall. \$20-\$93. (619) 235-0804, www.sandiegosymphony.com.*

**"Tenor is the Night"** The Hutchins Consort will perform operatic fare, Broadway favorites, folk songs and more. *7:30 p.m. Jan. 9. The Neurosciences Institute, 10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive, La Jolla. \$15-\$40. (760) 632-0554, www.hutchinsconsort.org.*

## DANCE

**Cabaret Dances** Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance Theater presents this sexy program featuring a collection of duets and trios. *Jan. 11, 18 and 25. Anthology, 1337 India St. \$15 and up. (619) 595-0300, www.sandiegodancetheater.org.*

## ART

**"Tibet: Imagery by Kenneth Parker"** San Diego Natural History Museum is pleased to feature fine-art photographer Kenneth Parker. His shots revolve around the culture and landscape of Tibet. *Through March 1. San Diego Natural History Museum, 1788 El Prado, Balboa Park. Free. (619) 255-0244, www.sdnhm.org.*

**"The Sculptor's Hand"** The exhibition displays the work of 13 modern and contemporary sculptors including Eduardo Chillida, Henry Moore, Martin Puryear, Mark di Suvero and Armando Amaya. *Opens Jan. 9, through Feb. 28. Tusende Gallery, 820 Prospect St., La Jolla. (858) 454-3691, www.tusendegallery.com.*

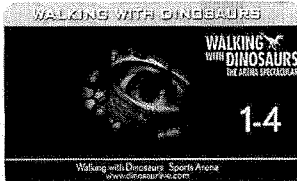






## ODDS & ENDS

**5th Annual Juried Motor Car Classic** Vintage and modern cars will be on display. *11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 11. La Jolla Cove. (619) 233-5008, www.lajollabythesea.com.*

**21st Annual San Diego Boat Show** For the first time ever, the show will debut a "green" area where boaters can learn how to be more environmentally conscious while on the water. *Jan. 8-11. San Diego Convention Center, 111 W. Harbor Drive. \$5-\$10. (858) 274-9924, www.sandiegoboatshow.com.*

# JANUARY / ENERO 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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					 <p>1-4</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p>		<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>		 <p>9-11</p>	 <p>10-Feb 15</p>
 <p>11</p>	<p>12</p>		<p>14</p>		 <p>16</p>	 <p>17</p>
<p>18</p>		<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>		<p>23</p>	<p>24-4</p> <p>TOSCA San Diego Civic Theater www.sandiegocivictheater.org</p>
<p>25</p> <p>CARLSBAD SAN DIEGO MARATHON Piazza Camino Real www.carlsbadmarathon.com</p>		<p>27</p>	 <p>28</p>	<p>29</p>		<p>31</p> <p>Diamond in the Rough Gala</p> <p>DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH GALA Manchester Grand Hyatt www.centuryclubofsandiego.org</p>

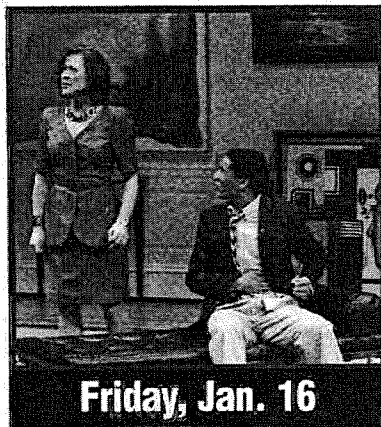
# GAY & LESBIAN TIMES

January 15, 2009

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## Friday, Jan. 16

**'Six Degrees of Separation':**  
John Guare's Obie-Award winning play *Six Degrees of Separation* is an intriguing, insightful exploration of celebrity and the games we play to elevate our significance – and it's playing through Feb. 15 at The Old Globe Theatre. In the play, the Kittredges' lives revolve around the high-stakes world of the New York art scene, where the appearance of success is everything. One evening as they are entertaining, a charming young man enchants the couple. As their involvement with him takes unexpected twists and turns, they begin to question not only his identity but their own. Tickets range from \$29-\$68. For more information, visit [www.theold-globe.org](http://www.theold-globe.org) or call the box office at 619-23-GLOBE (45623).



# DEL MAR VILLAGE VOICE

January 1, 2009

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## **Tony Award-winner Karen Ziemba leads cast at Old Globe's 'Six Degrees of Separation'**

The Tony Award®-winning Old Globe presents the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Six Degrees of Separation*, by John Guare (*The House of Blue Leaves*, *Landscape of the Body*), directed by Trip Cullman, will run in the Old Globe Theatre Jan. 10 – Feb. 15. Broadway veteran Karen Ziemba, who will play "Ouisa," won the Tony for the musical "Contact" and was nominated for her work in "Steel Pier," "Never Gonna Dance" and "Curtains!." Tickets are available by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, online at [www.TheOldGlobe.org](http://www.TheOldGlobe.org), or by visiting the Globe Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

# NORTH COUNTY TIMES

January 8, 2009

PREVIEW SECTION

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**"Six Degrees of Separation"** — The Old Globe presents John Guare's Pulitzer Prize-winning play about a charming con artist who convinces a wealthy Upper East Side couple that he's the son of a famous film star opens Saturday and runs through Feb. 15; showtimes, 7 p.m. Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; 8 p.m. Thursdays-Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays; *Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego*; \$29-\$66; (619) 234-5623.

# RANCHO SANTA FE REVIEW

December 18, 2008

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## **Old Globe presents 'Six Degrees of Separation'**

The Tony Award®-winning Old Globe presents the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Six Degrees of Separation*, by John Guare (*The House of Blue Leaves*, *Landscape of the Body*), directed by Trip Cullman, will run in the Old Globe Theatre Jan. 10 – Feb. 15. Broadway veteran Karen Ziemba, who will play "Ouisa," won the Tony for the musical "Contact" and was nominated for her work in "Steel Pier," "Never Gonna Dance" and "Curtains!." Tickets are available by calling (619) 23-GLOBE, online at [www.TheOld-Globe.org](http://www.TheOld-Globe.org), or by visiting the Globe Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

# SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL TIMES

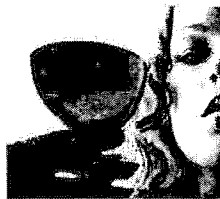
January 1, 2009

YU YU

## "Six Degrees of Separation" [六次の隔たり]

上流階級の夫妻と謎めいた黒人青年の交流 / J・グエアによる大ヒット戯曲

⑤ ニューヨーク五番街。高級マンションに暮らす美術商のキドリッジ夫妻は上流階級の生活を楽しんでいた。ある晩、自宅でパーティーを開いていたところ、血まみれの黒人青年が助けを求めて訪ねてくる。ポールと名乗る彼は、ハーバード大学に通う夫妻の息子の同級生で、父親は名優シドニー・ポワチエであると言う。夫妻は洗練された身のこなしと上品な言葉使いの彼を信頼し、家へ上げる。ポールは巧みな会話でパーティーに訪れていた人々を魅了し、見事なグルメ料理の腕前も披露する。おかげで、夫妻がゲストの1人と交渉していた資金繰りの話もスムーズにまとまる。その夜、キドリッジ家に泊めてもらうことになったポールは、父親が監督を務める自作の映画に夫妻を出演させると約束する。ところが、その後、彼の話はすべて虚構であると判明してしまう――。



⑥ 現代アメリカ演劇界を代表する劇作家ジョン・グエアによる戯曲。上流階級で虚栄を張って生きる人々の心の深淵を描く異色の人間ドラマとして、ブロードウェイを始め、世界中で絶賛された。1993年にはグエア自ら脚本を手がけて、フレッド・スケピシ監督、ストックカード・チャニング、ウィル・スミス、ドナルド・サザーランドらの出演により映画化されている(邦題『私に近い6人の他人』)。「Six Degrees of Separation」(六次の隔たり)には、人が自分の知り合いを6人以上介すると、世界中の入々と間接的な知り合いになるという意味が込められている。

⑦ THE GLOBE THEATRES (Old Globe Theatre), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park / 619-239-2255 (T)。期間—1/10(土)～2/15(日)迄。上演—火・水曜：7pm、木・金曜：8pm、土曜：2pm & 8pm、日曜：2pm & 7pm。チケット—未定。http://www.oldglobe.org